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July 24th 1910



A SUNDAY LESSON — Page 17.

Little Rubi, The Wood-Carver,

AND OTHER STORIES.

NEW YORK:
PUBLISHED BY T. Y. CROWELL.
744 BROADWAY.

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LITTLE RUBI, THE WOOD-CARVER.

CHRISTEN, the father of Rubi, was a guide. If you ascended the Mettenberg some years since, you may have seen him. He had two sons, Joseph, a handsome young fellow, who was a guide like his father, and poor, deformed little Rubi.

"Poor lad," his father would say. "He will always be a burden to us, he is so lame and so misshapen. I wish he was like our Joseph, but alas! he is so ugly and so helpless."

Rubi cried when his father spoke so

roughly of him, but his mother wiped his tears with her coarse apron, and said, —

"Never mind, poor boy. I will buy you something nice the next time I go down to sell my lace," for she used to make lace, and sell it to the fine ladies who went by in the diligence. So one day she bought him a wooden toy representing a goat, carved by Pete, who lived along the Black Lütschĭne, and who made his living by doing such work.

Rubi thought the goat was not as natural as it might be. Its head seemed too small, and its legs too long, but he did not say so to his mother; for although he was only a deformed little Swiss boy, he had finer feelings than some other better folks, and he was very thankful to his mother for her kindness, although he did not think

much of his present as a work of art. He kept constantly looking at the ill-shaped goat, and wondering if he could not carve if he should try.

He was so persistent in asking, that finally his mother got the necessary tools for him, and he not only succeeded, but he soon became very expert. He worked daily in his father's absence. He would often say, —

"Dear mother, if I can be as good a wood-carver as some have been, then I shall not be a burden to you."

"You are not a burden to me, Rubi," she would reply. "You are the comfort of my life." Then his mother would kiss him; and thus these two seemed dearer to each other for the very helplessness of poor Rubi, and his dependence upon her love.

One cold autumn day Christen and Jose were near the deep gorge between the Jungfrau and the Wengernalp, and they were caught by the severe storm. Oh! what storms those Oberland giants can get up among themselves. Christen was brought home with a broken leg, trying to save Jose, who fell.

"There will be no one to support you now," groaned the father. "That poor, helpless Rubi will be more of a burden than ever, and you, the mother, will get blind over your lace work, if you have to support us all."

"Not so, father," cried Rubi. "I have a little money here I have saved up. Take it, use it, it is all yours."

The father did not know how the boy earned the money. He thought it had been

the gift of some traveller who had taken compassion upon the poor, deformed lad. The money which had been paid from time to time at the wayside by those who purchased Rubi's carvings was soon exhausted, because only pedestrians made use of that mountain path, and Rubi had little chance of selling his work. Then how hard the poor mother had to toil, and Rubi cried every night to think that he was only a burden, and could not support his mother as he hoped.

One day there were footsteps heard without, and in came Hottinger, the rich dealer in carved work. In his hand he held a delicate carving of a chamois climbing over the rocks.

"Does the boy who carved this live here?" he asked.

"No," said the father from his bed in the corner, "no one lives here but my wife and me, and that poor, helpless creature yonder. If only my handsome Joseph had been spared, he could have showed you, sir, the road over to Meiringen. It is there, I suppose, the man lives who carved yonder piece."

"No, father, no," cried poor Rubi. "It is I who carved yonder piece."

"You!" exclaimed the father. "Sir, the boy must have gone crazy. He never carved a thing in his life. Alas! is that to be added to my misfortunes? Is the boy to be an idiot, like Jose Horner's children over at Brienz?" And he looked at his broken leg, and groaned, while the tears ran down his cheeks.

"It is very strange," said Hottinger,

"for the man of whom I bought this, told me that the boy who lived here carved it; and I have come to order some work of him."

The mother was not at home, but had gone out to sell her lace, and the father would not listen to his son. He thought Rubi was getting crazed or idiotic, as so many of the Swiss are; and he would not allow any orders for copies of the carving to be left with them, for, as he honestly said, he would not cheat the merchant into thinking that the orders would be filled.

As you see, Christen was a very honest, straightforward fellow, but a very stupid and a very obstinate one. Hottinger left to look elsewhere for the artist. Rubi hobbled out of the chalet after him.

"O sir, please, I am not an idiot.

Father tires of the sight of me because I am ugly and misshapen. I am not like handsome Jose, my brother, but I did, sir, I did carve the piece in your hand." And then Rubi cried from very excitement, and eagerness to make the merchant believe him. But his tears, and his twitching and trembling occasioned by his earnestness, did not make his appearance more prepossessing; and the man was only the more convinced that the father was right, and the child was out of mind. He thought that the beautiful chamois could never have been the work of that miserable deformed boy.

While still the child sat on the roadside, crying as if his heart would break from the disappointment, he saw his mother coming up the mountain path in the dis-

tance. Then his eagerness to keep the merchant until she should come, made his manner more crazy than before, for he knew that if his mother reached there before the merchant left, she could tell him that it was he who had done the wonderful carving. Poor Rubi caught the merchant by the arm, but it was not hard to shake off a child so deformed. Then he put both arms around the merchant's leg, so that he could not free himself without hurting Rubi. The merchant looked angry; and the poor boy released his hold, and threw himself flat upon the grass with such a sad and pitiful cry, that the merchant stopped to look at him. But it seemed as if the child's heart was broken, and he did not even offer to pick up the little copper coins the merchant threw

down before him. It seemed as if the last hope of getting work was gone, and all his dreams of helping to support his mother were over. He must always be the poor, helpless burden that he had been.

The merchant was so touched by the look of deep distress on the face of the boy, that he could not leave him, and before he had made up his mind as to what he should do, Rubi's mother came up.

She confirmed what the poor little cripple had said. Yes, Rubi had indeed carved the work that was so much admired. The mother was so proud to hear her poor little cripple praised, that she raised him up tenderly in her arms, and said, —

"He will yet get work to do like the workmen in the great cathedral."

"Oh, no, mother," he cried, "no one will trust in me, no one believes in me, only you, mother. I had thought to earn something to help you. But I shall always be a burden. The gentleman spurned me: everybody hates me, only you, dear mother."

He put his thin arms around her neck; and as she held him, her tears mingled with his, and she wiped them away with her rough, coarse hands, for she had known hard work and much trouble, this poor Swiss mother, and she was the reverse of gay and fashionable women, for her heart was soft and her hands rough and coarse.

"Nay, my lad, but the rich merchant praises thy work, and he will order more."

And the mother was right. Rubi had orders for as much work as he could do.

He helped his father more than his handsome brother Jose had ever done. There were none in the family who earned so much for their support as the poor deformed lad, and he was as patient and as humble as before, even though he was known through the valley as Rubi, the great carver in wood, instead of being spoken of as that helpless burden, the cripple Rubi.

A Sunday Lesson.



MOTHER! isn't Emmie naughty? I've told her so, and she won't mind me. She has dragged out her box of ninepins, and she is playing with them on Sunday."

"And what are you doing, Ronald?" asked Mrs. France of her little boy.

"I'm reading my new book that auntie gave me," said Ronald, proudly, for he could read very nicely, though he was only six.

"Sunday" was a book he could manage very well, as the print was good, and the pictures such as unlearned eyes could make out for themselves.

"Can't you read to Emma a bit?" asked his mother.

"Oh, she fidgets so!" said Ronald. "And she will turn to pictures I am tired of. Mother, I like to keep Sunday well—even pussy knows I won't play with her on Sunday."

It was a pleasant, shady garden in which the children were spending Sunday afternoon, while nurse was at church, and their mother sat under the veranda with a wee baby on her knee. Ronald had mounted his precious volume on a chair, while Emmie, at a little distance into the road, had found a level bit of ground on which to set up her ninepins.

She was only three years old, and could neither read nor go to church, and only knew that God cared for little children,

and that Jesus was once a little child as small as herself. Yes! she knew one thing more — a few verses of the hymn that Ronald said every Sunday, "Once in David's royal city." And she was singing this over softly to herself, as she tried to fold a ninepin up in a leaf like a shawl, pretending it was a doll.

Ronald was surprised to find that his mother did not call to Emmie to put away her ninepins. Instead of that, she said to her little boy, —

"I am afraid, as nurse is out and I am busy, and you do not care to amuse Emmie, we must leave her alone, she is so quiet and happy."

"But she isn't keeping Sunday," said Ronald. "O mother! here is such a 'musing picture, if you could only see it."

"Show me! show me the picture!" said little Emmie, dropping her doll nine-pin and hurrying up.

But Ronald shut his book.

"You wouldn't understand," he said; "and you would hurt my best book."

It was not a very kind speech; but Ronald had been six months away from home, and had learned to be too fond of his own way and his own comfort.

His mother had been ill, and now that she was better and able to have her boy back, she was grieved to notice this, and hoped to teach him a kinder and happier way of living.

Emmie was a patient, good-tempered little girl, and trotted back after the rebuff, to her own employments, while Ronald went in-doors.

Presently a little beggar-girl came by in the road, crying quietly to herself. Emmie stopped her play to peer out through the gate.

"What's the matter?" asked the little woman. "Don't cry!"

"I've lost the cake the lady gave me," sobbed the poor child.

"I've got no cake to-day," said Emmie; "but here, take my best ninepin, and don't cry."

And Emmie handed through the gate her treasured king ninepin, with its crested head, wrapped clumsily in a laurel leaf, fastened together with a thorn.

"It was my own, I could give it to her," murmured she; "and now she won't cry any more."

And back to her play once more went the little comforter.

In the evening mother went to see Ronald in bed, as was her custom.

"Well, my boy, Sunday is over," she said; "and who do you think has kept it best, you or Emmie?"

"Oh, I have, mother dear, of course!" replied Ronald. "But then, Emmie is very small, you see," he rejoined.

"Well, now, I think Emmie has kept it best," said his mother.

Ronald stared, and turned very red.

"Emmie, mother! why, she played with ninepins!"

"And gave her very best one to a little beggar-girl in trouble," said Mrs. France; "while you would neither read to her nor let her look at the pictures in your book. I think, if the holy Jesus had been on earth to-day, passing by our garden gate, he

would have thought Emmie was trying to be a little follower of his, while you, Ronald, had forgotten one of his great precepts, — to love your neighbor as yourself."

Ronald was silent. All this was so new to him, that he was honestly puzzled.

"Mother, I see now I wasn't as kind as Emmie," he said at last. "But tell me, isn't it right to try and keep Sunday, and read good books? Miss Munster always said so at Latimer House; and she thought I was a good boy, because I was quiet on Sundays."

"Yes, dear, it is very right to have one day specially to think of God and read of him, but we must not imagine because we are quiet and have a good book in our hands, that we are keeping Sunday, unless

our hearts are good, as well. Now, instead of thinking of the pictures in 'Sunday,' you were blaming Emmie in your heart for playing. Besides, what is right for one person, is not always right for another. Emmie is so tiny she must play a great deal. God has made her little, and he would never blame her for enjoying her toys even on his day. When she grows older, and can read and have nice books, like you, she will want to learn about him, more than to play at ninepins. And I hope then she will be gentle and kind, and show baby her pictures and books. Now, good-night, Ronald dear: think it over, what I have said."

"Mother, stay," said Ronald, sitting up in bed. "I'll do that next Sunday, too. I'll read to Emmie, and show her my 'Sun-

day ' pictures, and be kind to her. Won't that be keeping Sunday better? eh! mother dear? "

Mrs. France gave Ronald another kiss, and tucked him up. She was beginning to have better hopes of her little boy, since he could see his faults, and promise to amend them.

GEORGE IN THE BRINE.



HEN Charley had finished weeding the garden he came into Aunt Mattie's room, where he found that dear old lady sitting in her easy-chair by the window, sewing.

"I'm just as tired as I can be!" he exclaimed.

"Well," said Aunt Mattie, looking at him through her spectacles, "suppose you sit down here and rest yourself."

So Charley fanned himself with his hat for a little while after he had seated himself in the large rocking-chair: then he said, —

"Please tell me a story, aunty: you can always tell such good ones."

"I was thinking of one when you came into the room," said she, smiling: "so you are just in time."

Charley's eyes brightened, and he straightened himself up to listen.

"When I was a girl," began Aunt Mattie, "I lived in the country, and half a mile from our house there lived a family by the name of Purdy. One morning Mr. and Mrs. Purdy called at our house as they were passing, and said. that they would be away from home, for some good reason, until the next day. Not thinking it best for the children to be alone all night, they asked if I would be kind enough to go over and stay with them. I knew of nothing to prevent, so I readily promised to do

as they wished. A while before night I went over to the Purdy cottage. There I found the children, ten in number, all looking for me. Mary and Jane were the oldest, and George was next. The neighbors called him a bad boy. All except George were kind, well-disposed children. I soon found that he had teased the others all day, and had kept things in a perfect uproar.

"It came time to do up the evening chores, but George had decided not to do anything, John and Willie, his two younger brothers, brought the wood for the morning and evening use, and stacked it up against a very large meat-barrel which stood uncovered in one corner of the large, old-fashioned kitchen. The meat had nearly all been used out, and

only a large quantity of brine remained. It was growing late when Mary said, —

"'George, you ought to help the other boys about the evening work. It is late, and there is so much to be done.'

"'I shall do just as I please about it,' replied George. 'I'm not going to be bossed by any of you women folks.'

"Then he marched around the room, stepping on pussy's tail and kicking Fido to show his independence. Finally, he climbed upon the wood, and took a seat upon the edge of the meat-barrel. We all begged him to get down, but it was of no use to say anything to one so self-willed and contrary as George. He was determined to stay there, because we wanted him to get down. The little ones went on pleasantly with their play and the older

ones with their work, when suddenly, *splash* went something, and looking around we saw George's two feet sticking out of the barrel. He was head and shoulders in the brine. He could not get out alone, and he was so large that it took all our strength to lift him out. Then he ran around the room crying with pain, because the strong brine was in his eyes, and stinging his flesh wherever it touched him. He was a pitiful looking object. We all felt sorry for him, and soon had some water ready for him to bathe his flesh and smarting eyes. George did not forget for many a day his falling into the brine. Until his father and mother came home, he was very meek and quiet, as well as obliging."

"Was George always good after that? Did he grow up to be a good man?" inquired Charley.

"No, dear, I am sorry to say that he did not grow better as he grew older. He did not try to rule his own spirit, and every year he became more overbearing and unkind. When he became a man he married a sweet, gentle woman, but she died in a few years from his unkind treatment. He is now a miserable man with very few friends. Do you remember the Bible verse about the man who has no rule over his own spirit?"

"'He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls,'" repeated Charley, thoughtfully.

A Faithful Dog.

AN interesting story of a dog has been told by a gentleman who was travelling in France during the late war with Germany. He met, one day, some wounded soldiers returning to their regiments, and observed one of them who had a little dog, an iron-gray terrier, evidently English, following at his heels, but only on three legs. In an earnest manner the man told him how the dog had been the means, under Providence, of saving his master's life. He had been struck by a ball in the chest when fighting near Ham, and lay on the ground for six



hours after the battle was over. He had not lost consciousness, but the blood was flowing freely, and he was getting weaker and weaker. There were none but the dead near him, and his only companion was the English terrier, who prowled restlessly round him, with its master's kepi (military cap) in its mouth. At last the dog set off at a trot, and the wounded soldier felt sure that his only friend had deserted him.

The night grew dark, and the cold intense, and he had not even the strength to touch his wounds, which every instant grew more and more painful. His limbs grew cold, and feeling a sickly faintness stealing over him, he gave up all hope of life, and recommended himself to God. Suddenly, when it had come to the worst, he heard a bark, which he knew belonged

to but one little dog in the world. He felt something lick his face, and saw the glare of lanterns. The dog had wandered for miles till he reached a roadside inn. The people had heard the cannon all day, and seeing the kepi in the dog's mouth, and noticing his restless movements, followed him. He took them straight to the spot, faster than they could follow him with a little cart, just in time. When the friendly help arrived the man had fainted, but he was saved. There were tears in the man's eyes whilst he told the story. The dog had also been touched in the leg by a ball in the same battle, and had since been lame. He had got him when a puppy from a sailor at Dunkirk, and called him "Beal."

Many weeks later, in a different part of

France, the same gentleman, stopping at some village, recognized Beal, who also recognized him. On inquiry, he found that in a more recent battle poor Beal's late master had been killed, and its present owner, knowing the soldier and the dog, had taken pity on the poor animal, and had adopted him as his own. Beal had attached himself to him to a certain extent, but still seemed restless, and grieving for his late master. On the gentleman's leaving to continue his journey, the little dog followed him for some distance, and then, looking wistfully at him, turned and trotted slowly back.

HONEST HAL.

HARRY ESTCOTT, or Hal, as he was usually called, was the boldest and most active boy in the village of Coomleigh. He was only thirteen, but he was well grown, strong, and healthy, and had never known what it was to have a day's sickness.

High-spirited, good-tempered, and ever ready for fun that had no harm in it, he was the general favorite, and was always called upon by other boys for his help in every matter requiring a clear head, a steady hand, or a strong will.

It was said that no one but Hal Estcott

would have dared to climb that tall, smooth tree by the river, just to bring down little Joey Hakon's kite, which had got among the topmost branches.

Only Hal would have had the courage and the kindness to throw aside his jacket and boots, and dash into that same river, to pull out Annie Weston's little dog, that had swum out too far, and was being carried away by the current.

Only Hal would have ventured to collar the butcher's bull-dog, for rushing out at a poor lame old woman, who was carrying a bundle of fagots down the street.

It will be seen from all this that Hal was a brave boy, and it can well be believed that no adventure or attempt requiring either courage or skill, was often set on foot without his presence and help.

About a mile and a half out of the village of Coomleigh, stood Squire Hollingworth's house. A grand old place it was, with massive walls and old-fashioned windows, and great rooms, and dark, solid furniture, which you could see at once belonged to years long past.

Surrounding this noble mansion, were flower-gardens and lawns, shrubberies and terrace-walks, and more than all, a fine orchard of several acres, and well stocked with many kinds of fruit.

We need scarcely say that this orchard was the great admiration of the village boys, and that a very usual walk with some of them, was to the top of the hill by the old hall, from which they could look down on the bright fruit garden with its varied treasures.

Cherry time had come round, and in the squire's orchard the old standard cherry-trees were laden with their coral treasure. Thrushes and blackbirds feasted to their heart's content, for the squire would never allow his gardeners to shoot one of the feathered songsters which thronged his gardens. They built in his shrubberies, eat his fruit all day, and warbled their thanks every evening, and were just the happiest little birds in the country. But cherries, we are sorry to say, were a temptation to thieves who had neither wings nor feathers; and many were the longing glances that marked the sunlight on the rich, ripe fruit, and they surveyed sadly the high wall that surrounded the orchard.

One evening some of the village boys had been playing foot-ball in the meadow

that sloped softly up the hill on one side, and down to the orchard on the other. Tired at last, they stopped to rest, panting and thirsty. Hal Estcott was among them, his bright face flushed with delight, his eyes sparkling with enjoyment.

"Oh, dear me!" sighed Mark Reed, the biggest boy of the group. "Are you not dreadfully thirsty, boys? I am, and that's a fact."

"So am I," yawned Moses Meeks, a fat-faced lad, with light hair and eyebrows. "What wouldn't I give for some of them cherries over there!"

"The birds are always eating them, and I do not see why we should not have a few!" growled Tim Moody, a shock-headed fellow, brown with freckles. "I do not see, either, as there'd be much harm in it: we needn't take a lot."

"Hush, boys," cried Hal. "You don't know what you are talking about! Come along, let's be going home. It's just upon six o'clock, one can see by the sun."

"It is not your place to bid us hush, anyway," said Mark. "If we choose to talk about cherries, talk about 'em we will, for all you say."

"It isn't wrong to *talk* about cherries, Mark," replied Hal, more quietly: "that's not what I meant. But it is wrong to want other people's fruit, and to wish we could take it."

"Wrong or no wrong," said Moses, "I *do* want some; and if that wall weren't such a high affair, I would soon have a capful of cherries, whatever Hal Estcott might say."

"Well, the wall *would* be a shade too

much for *your* climbing," muttered Tim Moody with a mocking chuckle. "But here's Hal would think nothing of it. Would you, Hal? You would be over and back again like a bird."

"I'm not going to try," said Hal, decidedly. "Come along, boys, it's time for tea."

"Now, just look here, Hal Estcott," said Mark. "You know you are a prime fellow, and we are all very fond of you. You are as active as a cat, and it wouldn't take you three minutes to fetch us fruit enough for the lot of us. The gardeners always go to their tea at six, and the coast's quite clear. Here we are close by the wall. I will give you a leg up, and the whole thing can be done in no time."

Harry drew himself up proudly. "Mark Reed," said he, "if that wall were only a foot high, I wouldn't step over it into the squire's orchard; and what's more, none of you shall act the thief either, for as sure as you try, I shall go round to the hall and report you."

"Dearie me!" sneered Moses. "We are coming out in a new character. So you are going to turn spy and informer, are you?"

The hot blood flushed Hal's cheeks, but he said, quietly, —

"You know, boys, that I hate telling tales, but I will not stand by and see the squire robbed: so, there, you have my answer!" And Hal folded his arms, and looked firmly round at his companions.

Mark Reed's manner grew more threat-

ening. He approached Hal with his great fist clenched, and said, roughly, —

"Now, master preacher, you have got to do one of two things, or take the consequence. Either you go over that wall and bring us some cherries, or you trot off home, and do not preach to any one, and leave us to do as we please."

"I shall do neither of these things," replied Hal. "I shall certainly not try to steal fruit, nor will I go home to the village unless you all go too."

Mark uttered a cry of rage, and aimed a blow at Hal's head. The boy nimbly jumped aside, and before Mark could aim again, he was arrested by a shout of surprise and horror from some of his companions.

In the noise of the dispute, the boys had

not heard that a ladder had been moved on the other side of the wall, to the place opposite which they stood; and now a man's head and shoulders and a pair of strong arms appeared above, and the voice of the squire's head gardener said, —

"So you thought I had gone to tea, did you? A nice set you are! I know you all — you, Mark Reed, and a precious coward you are to strike a boy smaller than yourself; and you, Moses Meeks; and you, you ruffian of a Tim; and the rest of you, who would stand by and see a fellow abused, because he would not be a thief! Now all of you be off as quick as you can, except Hal Estcott. I want a word with him alone."

The boys needed no second bidding. Ashamed at being found out, they slunk

away, and Hal and the gardener were left by themselves.

"Just wait a minute or two, and I will come back to you," said the man; and he ran down the ladder into the orchard. Presently he came back with a little basket full of the ripest cherries, and put them into Hal's hands.

"There, my lad," said he, kindly, "take these home with you and enjoy them, and I shall speak to the squire about you. Honest boys like you don't grow on bushes, like blackberries, and I am sure he will be glad to make your acquaintance."

Hal thanked the gardener, and went home very much delighted. Nothing ever tasted half so good as those cherries, though Hal himself did not eat many, but

gave them nearly all to his little brother and sister.

It would have done your heart good to have seen the frolic that Hal and Jamie and Susie had that evening, Hal trundling the little girl in the big wheelbarrow, and Susie with her lap full of cherries, trying her best to make her brother eat his share.

But this was not all, for the next morning who should call at the cottage but the squire himself; and, after talking a while with Hal and his mother, he offered him the place of an under gardener at the hall, and wages beginning at seven shillings a week.

"You are rather young for the situation, Harry," said the squire, kindly; "but you are honest, and you have been brought up in the fear of God. I doubt not that

you will be both steady and intelligent, my boy. Only go on as you have begun, remembering that, 'He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely.'"



THE CHINCHILLA.

THIS little animal lives in burrows, under ground, like the rabbit. It is an inhabitant of South America, and abounds in the province of Chili. The chinchilla has a body about nine inches in length, and its somewhat bushy tail measures five or six inches more. It is clothed with a grayish fur, beautifully soft and delicate, and so much valued that as many as a hundred thousand skins have been imported into England in one year. Its rounded head with a sharp nose, its round, broad ears, its long whiskers and bright eyes, give the chinchilla something

of the appearance of a very large mouse. These little creatures live in companies, and feed on the roots of the plants which are plentifully found near their abodes.

The chinchilla is a very timid animal. It is said that when taken up it neither bites nor tries to escape, but will remain as quiet and still in its captor's bosom as in its own nest. It is very cleanly in its habits, and may be caressed or made a pet of, for it is entirely free from that unpleasant odor which rats have, and other animals of the same kind. Its two short, strong fore limbs, armed with strong claws, assist it in its mining operations under ground: its hind legs are very much longer. The ancient Peruvians used to make coverlets for their beds out of the fur of this useful little creature.

THE BOY THAT HAD THREE HANDS.

CLAUDE KING was a pretty little boy. If you met him in the street and looked in his face, and saw him for a little time at his own home, I am sure you would have thought him a beautiful boy, and never dreamed of his great affliction. He had bright blue eyes, rosy cheeks, and a pleasant, smiling face; but then, poor boy! he had three hands.

I suppose you would have noticed only his right and left hand, with the usual thumb and four fingers on each, that would have been useful to play ball, pick

up chips, bring water, and a hundred things, had it not been for that other little hand that kept them from doing anything properly. His father called it Claude's little "behind" hand. Now I don't mean that he really had a little hand growing out between his shoulders, under his coat, that kept pulling back his two other willing hands, but that he was such a slow boy — not lazy, but a little behind time, a little behind-hand.

When his mother said, "Claude, wash your face now: tea will be ready in five minutes," he would answer, pleasantly, —

"Yes, ma'am, in a minute." But it was sure to be ten minutes before he was ready to eat; and if his mother said ten, that little behind hand would hold him back fifteen. It made him late at meals, at

school, at church, and everywhere, till at last the boys nicknamed him "Behind-hand Claude."

His parents tried every way to cure him. "You are five minutes late at breakfast, Claude," said his father, one morning, "and four of us have waited five minutes. Do you know the table of fives?"

Claude began, "Five times one are five," and so on till "five times four are twenty."

"Very well, my son, you can sit by the stove and wait twenty minutes."

Claude would rather have waited an hour than hurried one minute, and when his time was up, it took him five minutes more to get to the table.

"I wish you could do something for my poor boy's behind hand," said his father to Claude's teacher. "I have tried in vain,

and I am in despair. He can't seem to think or understand that he is doing himself or any one else any harm by being always behind time."

Claude was not only late at school, but late at recitations, late getting in his seat after classes, late in at recesses, — always late. His teacher said one day, —

"You have hindered each of us in the room at least five minutes to-day; and five times thirty are one hundred and fifty minutes, or two and a half hours. School closes at three to-day, so the boys can go to the fair; but you will have to stay with me till half past five." It was quite a trial to Claude not to go to the fair, but he was not any more punctual the next day.

He said he did not like that little behind hand of his: it was always getting him in

trouble, and he tried hard to get rid of it. But in vain did his father promise him money, toys, books, and rides if he would be on time. "Time is worth more than money," his father said. "I don't think, my son, you would go to my purse and take out a few pennies every day. You say that would be stealing, but every one of my minutes is worth more than a penny, and yet you rob me of many every day. You steal my time, my boy, and you are a thief. If you took my money you might pay it back again, but you can not give me back my stolen time."

Then Claude would sob and cry, and promise; and for a day or two they would have hopes of him, and then he would be as bad as before.

"Hurry, Claude! come in as quick as

ever you kin," called old Chloe from the window one day.

"In a minute," said Claude, and kept on at his play in the grass. Before his minute — which was really about five — was up, there came a perfect deluge of rain, and Claude's clean linen suit was dripping wet.

"I wished it had washed off yer little behin' hand," said old Chloe, while she was putting on his dry clothes. He had been dressed to take a ride; but, when the time came, and the sun shone out bright after the quick shower, it found Claude with his old clothes on, and unfit to go.

"Is your name Claude King?" asked a man one day, stopping at their front gate.

"Yes, sir."

Then go straight to your father's

office, and tell him to meet Mr. Jones at the depot the next train east. That will give me time to tell Mr. Donnell. Now hurry, my boy, and don't let the grass grow under your feet."

"Yes, sir, in a minute," said Claude. He fastened the sail to his boat, rolled up the tail of his kite, and wound the ball of string, put them away, and hunted his hat, and also his hoop to roll as he went along, so that, as he stood in his father's office door, telling him his errand, the train stood in the depot; and one man on the platform said to another in the car, —

"I sent word to Mr. King to be here, and he agreed to meet us if he wanted the wheat. He hasn't come, so you may take it on to Boston."

Mr. King did want the wheat, and as

much as a hundred dollars was lost that time, because of Claude's little behind hand.

But it brought still greater trouble to all the family.

"I must go down town," said Mrs. King, one morning, to Claude. "Chloe's daughter is sick, and she has gone to stay all day. I shall leave you in charge of the house and Annie."

Claude was now eleven years old, and Annie but little over two. Two other children between him and Annie had died, and so she was the especial pet and pride of the house.

"You will take good care of Annie, won't you?"

"Yes, indeed, mother."

"Don't let her climb up the cistern curb and look down, will you? That is a new trick of hers."

"No, indeed, mother."

After several charges to Claude, his mother kissed Annie good-by, and went away, leaving the children in the wood-shed, where Claude was whittling a little boat that he was going to sail on a tub of water by and by.

Claude loved his sister dearly, and at first he answered her questions, but getting interested in his work, began to sing and whistle. Annie got hungry, and asked for cake. Claude answered, "In a minute — that's a good girl." And after asking several times, and getting only that answer, she went to the pantry, and came back with her little hands full of oyster-crackers.

"After eating a few, she said, "Please, Claude, get Annie drink o' water."

"Yes, in a minute." Two or three times she asked, and got only the same reply, with a little addition of impatience. "Yes — yes — in a minute, if you will stop your teasing."

Poor little Annie was very thirsty, and she knew that there was a bucket of water inside the curb around the cistern in the kitchen, for she had seen her mother draw it, and put it in the ice to keep it cool. She pushed up a chair, climbed up, and leaned over to dip out a cupful. "O Claude!" he heard her cry from the shed, and answered, "In a minute," but was still whittling on his boat when his mother came in a little after.

"Where's Annie?" she asked.

"Oh, somewhere," answered Claude. "Let me think, where did she say she was

going to?" And then he remembered the water and the dangerous cistern, and, dropping his boat and knife, started up.

But his mother was already in the kitchen. There by the cistern stood the chair with a few broken crackers in it. Looking down, she saw the tin cup floating on the water, and a part of the dress of her little Annie.

I cannot tell you of the grief in the family, or of Claude's great sorrow and remorse. For many days he could neither eat nor sleep. All the time he seemed to hear his little sister's voice calling him, and his mother's white, tearful face was a constant reproach.

But he no longer had three hands. His little behind hand was gone forever, and he never answered "In a minute," again.

FULL OF THE BIBLE.

THERE was once a little boy whc went to Sunday school regularly, and learned all his lessons well; so that he had a great many Bible verses in his mind. He was a temperance boy. This boy was on a steamboat, making a journey. One day, as he sat alone on deck, looking down into the water, two ungodly gentlemen agreed that they should go and try to persuade him to drink. So the wicked man drew near to the boy, and in a very pleasant voice and manner, invited him to go and drink a glass of liquor with him.

"I thank you; but I never drink liquor."

"Never mind, my lad: it will not hurt you. Come and drink with me."

"'Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise,'" was the boy's ready answer.

"You need not be deceived by it. I would not have you drink too much. A little will do you no harm."

"'At the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder,'" said the boy. "I think it wiser not to play with adders."

"My fine little fellow," said the crafty man, putting on a most flattering air, "I like you. You are no child. You are fit to be a companion of a gentleman. It will give me great pleasure if you will come and drink a glass of the best wine with me."

The lad looked him steadily in the eyes,

and said, "My Bible says, 'If sinners entice thee, consent thou not.'"

This was a stunning blow to the tempter, and he gave up his wicked attempt, and went back to his companion.

"How did you succeed?" said he.

"Oh, the fact is," he replied, "that little fellow is so full of the Bible, you can't do anything with him."

And every boy's mind and every girl's mind should be so full of the Bible, that wicked tempters cannot do anything with them. Now there is one verse which shows that this is just the right use to make of the Bible: "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee."